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MAJOR MAYOR MEETUP
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An artist's rendering illustrating LNG Canada project at full build-out.
COURTESY LNG CANADA

LNG DECISION DELAYED

Low energy prices impact proposed $40B liquefied natural gas plant in Kitimat

metroNEWS

Good odds on the odd

SUPER BOWL SUNDAY

Vancouverites get a kick out of novelty bets

Cam Tucker
Metro | Vancouver

All bets are off when it comes to the wild and wacky things Vancouverites can wager on ahead of the Super Bowl.

Will analyst Phil Simms wear a sweater during the CBS television broadcast of Sunday's game?

Will there be a power outage at Levi's Stadium?

Will Donald Trump's name be mentioned?

Those are just three examples of the 270 different novelty bets for Super Bowl 50 featured at PlayNow.com, according to BCLC spokesperson Jessica Gares.

Gambling on The Big Game is nothing new.

But the industry has evolved to allow those with more of a casual interest in the game to place bets on the odd, pop culture aspects of the event, including the predominant colour of Beyonce's outfit or what colour Gatorade will be dumped on the winning coach.

For last year's Super Bowl, which featured the Seattle Seahawks and New England Patriots (and the halftime show's infamous Left Shark), Gares said close to 2,000 novelty bets were made, totalling about $12,000.

By comparison, roughly $420,000 was wagered on 16,500 bets on playnow.com on the game, according to numbers released by BCLC.

It's estimated that $10 billion is wagered globally on the Super Bowl, with more than 200 million people placing bets on the game, according to BCLC.

More Super Bowl coverage on pages 10 & 28

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Julian Assange says he will exit embassy and risk arrest after UN panel's ruling. **World**

Body found buried under hoarded debris

INVESTIGATION

Signs of drug use, medical issues found: Officials

Thandi Fletcher
Metro | Vancouver

The coroner is trying to determine how a man died after police found his body buried under a pile of hoarded debris inside an apartment in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

Vancouver police spokesman Const. Brian Montague said officers were called to an apartment in the 500-block of East Hastings around 8 p.m. Wednesday after receiving a complaint of a bad smell.

When emergency responders arrived, they found the body of a man who lived in the apartment trapped under a large pile of junk. The man, who police are not identifying, was declared dead at the scene, said Montague.

"There were several feet of belongings that (paramedics) had to crawl over before they could get to him," he told Metro. "He had been deceased for some time. There was a fair bit of decomposition."

Montague said the cause of death has not yet been determined, but that there were signs of drug use and indications of fairly significant medical issues.

The B.C. Coroners Service has taken over the investigation and will determine how the man died, adding that investigators do not believe his death is suspicious.

A man was found dead under a pile of hoarded debris inside an apartment in the 500-block of East Hastings Street in Vancouver on Wednesday evening. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO

> **There were several feet of belongings that (paramedics) had to crawl over before they could get to him.** Const. Brian Montague

Hoarding is a serious issue in Vancouver, said Montague, adding that the city has an action response team comprised of city staff, mental health workers and emergency responders in place to offer help for residents who struggle with compulsive hoarding.

"It's a problem," he said. "It shocked me as a police officer how many of these homes I went into and found hoarding situations — some more severe than others — but in many cases just unbelievable circumstances that people were living in."

Capt. Jonathan Gormick, spokesman for Vancouver Fire and Rescue, said hoarding is a serious public health hazard that poses significant health and safety risks for individuals, family members and neighbours.

"It's a danger to others around them because it increases the fuel load … if it were to catch fire," he said. "It's also a danger to us if we need to gain access in a fire or an emergency."

Gormick urged anyone concerned about a potential hoarding situation to call 311.

RALLY

Roosh V event cancelled, but protest will go on

A Vancouver meeting planned for devotees of pro-rape blogger "Roosh V" may be cancelled, but protesters say that won't stop them from still gathering Saturday to rally against misogyny and to raise funds for women's shelters.

Protest co-organizer Jennifer Kim of the grassroots feminist group Guerrilla Feminist Collective said about 400 people are planning on attending the peaceful protest taking place outside the Vancouver Public Library's Central Branch on Saturday.

"I think people are still really fired up," she told Metro. "Even when the event was cancelled, I thought it would be a good opportunity to talk about some of these issues that are ongoing. Just because they cancelled doesn't mean that we won."

On Wednesday evening, American blogger Daryush Valizadeh, known online as "Roosh V," posted to his website Return of Kings that he was cancelling a series of worldwide meetups planned for Saturday after being unable to guarantee the safety of those attending. A self-styled "pickup artist," Valizadeh has attracted outrage for blog posts that call women misogynistic names and argue that rape should be legal on private property. The meetups sparked public backlash and raised the ire of mayors across Canada this week, including Mayor Gregor Robertson, who said Valizadeh and his event would not be welcome in this city.

While she was pleased to see the event cancelled, Kim said she still believes there is a need to spark conversation and raise awareness of issues like racism, homophobia, and misogyny, which she said still exists at a "systemic level."

"It just comes down to being sick and tired of this attitude," she said. "It will be an opportunity to get the conversation going."

Saturday's protest starts at 7:30 p.m. in the atrium outside the Vancouver Public Library's Central Branch. THANDI FLETCHER/METRO

Roosh V ROOSHV.COM

AVALANCHES

Groups urge caution

Avalanche Canada and the BC Coroners Service have joined forced in hopes of saving lives in British Columbia's backcountry.

The two organizations have issued a special advisory urging backcountry users to know the conditions, take extreme caution and recognize escalating risks.

The advisory follows a human-triggered avalanche last week in east-central B.C., near McBride, that killed five snowmobilers and engulfed several others who survived.

Both Avalanche Canada and the coroners' service note most of the 17 snowmobilers at the Mount Renshaw site had proper rescue equipment and knew how to use it, preventing further loss of life. But the service says equipment alone is not enough, pointing to airbags that should have "floated" three of the Renshaw victims to the top of the slide, but could not save them because they were in a gully where snow flow was constricted.

Avalanche Canada executive director Gilles Valade says recognizing avalanche terrain and not exposing groups to the risk of a slide is even better than knowing how to respond after the snow has come down. THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

Lockdown lifted after no man with gun located

Vancouver Island University in Nanaimo was briefly locked down Thursday morning as police investigated a report of someone with a possible gun. RCMP Const. Gary O'Brien said a tip came in at about 10:30 a.m. of a man spotted with photography equipment and something in his back pocket that looked like a firearm.

Nanaimo RCMP searched the campus for a suspect for about 30 minutes while all students and staff were locked in their buildings. Police will be reviewing surveillance tapes and speaking with witnesses.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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A section of an artist's rendering of the LNG Canada project.
COURTESY LNG CANADA

Shell delays investment decision

OIL AND GAS

Commitment on LNG project postponed as profits plunge

Royal Dutch Shell is postponing a final investment decision on its proposed liquefied natural gas mega-project in British Columbia as it grapples with plummeting earnings due to low energy prices.

Chief executive Ben van Beurden said Thursday that the company was delaying a final commitment on the LNG Canada project in northwestern B.C. as it makes "substantial changes in the company" that will likely include further spending cuts on top of the $12.5 billion it cut last year.

A final decision on the LNG Canada project had been expected in the spring, but Shell Canada spokeswoman Tara Lemay says the joint venture behind the project will now make a decision by the end of the year.

"The LNG Canada joint venture partners have agreed that due to market conditions, it makes sense to shift the final investment decision to late 2016. In the meantime, the joint venture will continue to work on the competitiveness of the project," Lemay said in a statement.

B.C. Premier Christy Clark, speaking at an energy conference in Ottawa, said she was reassured to see the 2016 commitment.

"What I was pleased to see was Shell reconfirm its intention to make a final investment decision this year," said Clark.

"Even in these very uncertain times, which I acknowledge, that's affected their timeline .... they've reconfirmed the fact they want to go ahead with this project, which is going to mean tremendous growth for all of Canada."

Andy Calitz, chief executive of the LNG Canada joint venture, said he was pleased that a decision would be made this year given the turmoil in global energy markets, but he left open the possibility of further delays.

> **What I was pleased to see was Shell reconfirm its intention to make a final investment decision this year.**
> Premier Christy Clark

"Can you and I conjure up a set of conditions that could make a positive decision difficult? Yes. But could I also see that they are working to take that decision in the fourth quarter, absolutely," Calitz said from Ottawa.

Shell reported a 44 per cent drop in fourth-quarter earnings to $1.8 billion as low oil and gas prices hit its bottom line. The company has responded by delaying projects in Canada and Nigeria and withdrawing from a project in the United Arab Emirates. THE CANADIAN PRESS

COURT

Officers 'dubious' in terror sting: Expert

Police officers posing as spiritual guides in an undercover terrorism sting offered "dubious" and "eyebrow-raising" interpretations of Islam to a British Columbia man with extremist Muslim views, says an Islamic expert.

Omid Safi, head of Islamic studies at Duke University in North Carolina, told a B.C. Supreme Court on Thursday that the RCMP should have helped John Nuttall overcome his radical ideas, instead of preventing him from reaching out to mainstream, moderate religious leaders.

Nuttall and his common-law partner Amanda Korody were found guilty last summer of plotting to blow up the B.C. legislature on Canada Day in 2013. Their convictions are on hold while lawyers argue the pair was entrapped by the RCMP.

"I have questions about particular aspects of the ways in which the police seem to have presented themselves as a model of spiritual guides, offering highly dubious interpretations of Islam, putting themselves in a position of authority," Safi told the court.

"Those are all things that, to a scholar of Islam, certainly seem to be eyebrow-raising."

Defence lawyers have depicted Nuttall and Korody as impoverished former heroine addicts, living on welfare, who spent most of their time playing video games in their basement suite in Surrey.

Safi described Nuttall's understanding of Islam as shallow and superficial, informed by rambling and incoherent political grievances.

Transcripts from undercover surveillance recordings reveal Nuttall was searching for spiritual guidance and that he identified the main undercover RCMP officer as a religious authority and his one true Muslim brother, Safi said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

VANCOUVERING

with icons by **Danielle Vallée** from the noun project

Saving indigenous languages

University of Victoria's unique program aims to revitalize languages on the brink of being lost forever. StatsCan predicts just three Canada's many aboriginal languages will survive into the future. More than half of the endangered languages originate in British Columbia.

CAFÉ POLITICS
EDUCATION

Matt Kieltyka
Metro | Vancouver

SENĆOŦEN teacher SX̱EDŦELISIYE (Renee Sampson) speaks at University of Victoria's First People's House. COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA

Dr. Onowa McIvor
COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA

Onowa McIvor begins her email with "tânisi," the Cree word for "hello" or "how are you?"

With more than 83,000 people in Canada reporting Cree as their mother tongue in the 2011 census, it is one of the few indigenous languages thriving today.

Looking up the greeting's meaning is easy.

Sharing her language with others helps keep it alive and vibrant; and invites recipients to delve deeper into Canada's culture and history.

That's disappearing elsewhere.

At present, Statistics Canada predicts only three of the more than 60 recorded aboriginal languages in the country will survive into the future.

More than half of those endangered languages, 34 to be exact, originate in British Columbia, where McIvor says the number of fluent speakers for many dialects can be counted on one hand.

"The situation in B.C. is the most dire. There are literally communities in B.C. that have one speaker left," says the director of Indigenous Education at the University of Victoria. "There are many, many communities that have between five and 12 first-language speakers left."

A desperate race to revitalize those languages is officially on.

Last month, First Nations Summit Grand Chief Edward John, of B.C.'s Tl'azt'en Nation, addressed the UN about the importance of revitalizing indigenous languages around the world.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, which made many recommendations related to indigenous language revitalization last year, "has helped raise a national consciousness … and conscience" around the issue, McIvor says.

That increased awareness has come just in time, according to McIvor, who leads a team of researchers and educators trying to boost revitalization efforts throughout the country and helped set up UVic's first-of-its-kind Masters of Indigenous Language Revitalization degree program.

"It feels like times are changing. More people are paying attention, people are asking questions and more people are trying to do things," she says. "It does feel in this field that there's a shift, for sure, toward a more united, co-ordinated nationwide effort on language revitalization."

The task is enormous and the challenges are plenty, McIvor says.

The federal government "grossly underfunds" language revitalization (about $1 million per year) and success depends on adult learners not just becoming fluent at a language, but being proficient enough to get accredited so they can formally teach children.

Gains, after generations of cultural genocide, seem small in comparison but there are positive signs.

For example, McIvor says the W̱SÁNEĆ peoples in Greater Victoria have been successful in developing a cohort, five or six people, of new SENĆOŦEN (one of the region's indigenous languages) speakers.

"It sounds like not very many but, when it's a really small community, to have six new speakers who are all in their late 20s and early 30s, it's pretty phenomenal because all of those people are now speaking to their children in that language," McIvor says.

"They literally have young children in their community who are learning their language for the first time in a century."

McIvor's life goal is to have indigenous languages taught in public schools.

The benefits extend beyond indigenous communities, she believes.

"These are the original languages of this land. If the TRC taught us anything, it is that this is our shared history," McIvor says. "Of course, the reality is that it can only be taught as a subject. So are all these kids going to become proficient speakers of every language of the region they live in? Probably not. But they'll probably be able to learn how to introduce themselves, how to acknowledge the territory properly where they live and they might learn some place names around the places they live."

Only when indigenous languages are granted co-official language status will we have an equitable Canada, McIvor says.

Until then, those languages need to survive.

"We are at a desperate moment," she says. "We are exactly on the cusp of losing so many indigenous languages. What can ordinary people do about that? Support it. Don't be afraid of it. Support the fact there's an indigenous language that is the original language of where you live."

FOOD NOTES
CELEBRITIES LOVE THIS VANCOUVER TREAT

It's time to open your Pie Hole

Erin Ireland
Metro | Vancouver

Jenell Parsons is effective in satisfying celebrity pie cravings in Vancouver.

"Delivering to the largest yacht in the world is pretty exciting," says the 36-year-old entrepreneur whose handmade products have been requested by apple-pie-loving American philanthropist Dennis Washington multiple times. The Schwarzenegger family is also a Pie Hole customer.

Jenell and her small team offer fifty flavours on seasonal rotation and focusing on using local ingredients is a priority.

She says this is the largest selection of sweet and savoury pies in Canada. With a menu this extensive, pies must be made in small batches, like grandma's.

New to The Pie Hole is a Chocolate Hazelnut Cream Pie, built with a silky chocolate filling (made creamy with coconut milk), a toasted hazelnut crust (naturally gluten-free) and rich coconut whipped cream. It's to die for. Jenell's most long-standing and popular creations are The Fat Elvis and her classic Key Lime.

For Valentine's Day, Jenell is offering an assortment of her most popular mini pies wrapped in heart-shaped boxes complete with a card ($45) — sweet deal.

Pie Hole pies can be found at eateries across the Lower Mainland or can be ordered online at vancouverpiehole.com.

The chocolate hazelnut cream pie is among The Pile Hole's 50 offerings. ERIN IRELAND/METRO

THINK BIG. LIVE LOCAL

Orkestar Slivovica on the seawall in Vancouver. COURTESY DIANE SMITHERS

Eclectic musicians are making noise

VANCOUVER TRENDING **COMMUNITY BANDS**

Amy Logan
For Metro | Vancouver

Vancouver is home to a fascinating array of unique community bands.

From an ensemble that plays on homemade wooden horns and parades through the city dressed occasionally in evil clown costumes to a Balkan band swinging to the mesmerizing pulse of Roma music to the energy and joie de vivre of an East Van multi-instrumental group, Vancouver's community-focused band scene continues to evolve.

For Susan Gerofsky, a UBC professor of Mathematics Education and Environmental Education who plays tenor horn with Orkestar Slivovica, "the music itself is life-changing: wild rhythms, new scales, gorgeous harmonies and an amazing, uplifting vibe that stays with you long after the song is finished."

Orkestar Slivovica has 10 to 12 members and practises once or twice a week for its many gigs. The Carnival Band has been an East Van staple for the last 10 years, meeting weekly at Britannia Community Centre. Instruments include brass, woodwinds, drums, and voices, and the band has an egalitarian spirit, urging people to "bring just about any instrument you can carry. All are welcome."

As its name suggests, perhaps the most eclectic of Vancouver's community bands is the Legion of the Flying Monkeys (LFM).

Founded more than a decade ago and still going strong, they often dress in unique costumes, write their own subversive songs, and play on wooden instruments called Fuhorns, which the members themselves carve out of locally grown empresswood.

As band leader Mr. Fire-Man puts it, "there are peak moments on stage where we've transcended our various parts to become something else, perhaps a cultural memory."

The band's performances at an ongoing local event called Pancakes and Jam stand out for him as "stellar moments of audience/band melding," with the crowd "up front, dancing, singing, laughing in a frenzy of wild abandonment."

Gerofsky is similarly effusive in her praise for Orkestar Silvovica, noting there is a "tremendous camaraderie amongst members."

Favourite gigs include "playing up to our knees in a river at a hot summer music festival and a battle of the bands on Granville Street with one of the top trubaci bands from former Yugoslavia," not to mention more unusual gigs on the B.C. Ferries and the Grouse Mountain Skyride.

Mr. Fire-Man leads the Legion of Flying Monkeys in song.
COURTESY SHARON KALLIS

WHEN & WHERE

- Orkestar Slivovica will be hosting Slivovica Social Club with guests Forras Banda, which typically sees "people dancing in the aisles and on the tables," on Feb. 5 at Seven Dining Lounge.
- The LFM will be participating in Band Fight with Balkan Shmalkan at Lanalous on Feb. 13, and the Carnival Band performs at a roaring '20s night at Café Deux Soleils on Feb. 7.

It's a DATE!
VALENTINE'S DAY IS SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14

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Big-city mayors seeking big bucks

The mayors of Canada's largest cities are in Ottawa to make their pitches for federal funding, and this time, the prime minister will hear their requests. Metro compiled a list of "The Big Asks" from seven of the nation's biggest hubs. Here's what the leaders are looking for from the federal government.

1 Halifax
Mayor Mike Savage said Thursday he's looking for as much money as he can get from the federal government for infrastructure projects in his city. He said there is $2 billion in work that needs to be done over the next two decades to bring the city's aging water infrastructure up to environmental standards and to sustain the city's growing population.

2 Ottawa
Mayor Jim Watson is asking the federal government for funding for the $3-billion Phase 2 of the city's light rail transit. Watson noted they already have that commitment from the prime minister. However, he is also asking for funding for affordable housing, and for the feds to cut the red tape so municipalities can get the infrastructure cash quicker.

3 Toronto
Mayor John Tory has made it clear he wants federal funding to be "fair and stable" so cities can budget effectively. In terms of specifics, he's asking the federal government to cover one-third of the estimated $2.6 billion in repair backlog at Toronto Community Housing. Tory also wants federal cash for projects like the city's downtown relief line and a waterfront LRT.

4 Winnipeg
Mayor Brian Bowman has three priorities: transit, infrastructure and the environment. While he wouldn't get into specific dollar amounts, Winnipeg has several massive projects on the horizon, including the second phase of a six-phase rapid transit system ($590 million) and preventing the city's ancient sewers from overflowing into the rivers ($1.2 billion).

5 Calgary
Mayor Naheed Nenshi is also asking for infrastructure money. He wants a block funding setup with reporting mechanisms that allow cities to use federal money for projects right away, such as in the area of local affordable housing. He also hopes the mayors talk about cities' roles in climate change and how they can support the feds in what they're trying to accomplish.

6 Edmonton
Mayor Don Iveson is hoping the "unprecedented" access that big city mayors are getting from the federal government this week could mean support for social and affordable housing, as well as funding for the city's LRT. Iveson said over the next decade he would like to be able to expand light rail transit.

7 Vancouver
Mayor Gregor Robertson plans to leverage $250 million worth of city-owned land to entice the federal government into building new affordable housing. He is asking the feds for $500 million over five years to build 3,500 units of social housing on 20 city-owned sites. It's the largest housing proposal ever made by a civic government to Canada.

Baby Mohammad Al Masalma JENNIFER FRIESEN/FOR METRO

SYRIAN CRISIS

Calgary opens arms to first refugee baby

Lucie Edwardson
Metro | Calgary

The very first Syrian refugee baby born in Calgary — and possibly in Canada — since the government's commitment to resettle 25,000 Syrian refugees was welcomed into the world in the early hours of Tuesday morning.

But the birth of baby Mohammad Al Masalma has quite the story to go along with it.

"I wasn't expecting to be here when I had the baby," said the mother, Seham Talab through a translator. "But, I feel so grateful."

Talab went in for a clinic appointment Tuesday, not expecting to have her baby that day, and was rushed to the hospital where she was told she was in labour — already four centimetres dilated.

While husband Yahya Al Masalma was at home caring for their other children, two volunteers from the Syrian Refugee Support group stepped up to help Talab through the delivery.

> "We want to thank everybody for the wonderful sense of community we're feeling."
> Yahya Al Masalma

"She's in a new country, she doesn't speak any English and in her country they do things very differently there," said Ronnie Saadeh, who rushed to be by Talab's side when she heard what was happening.

Sereen Bishawi, the other volunteer who helped Talab through the birth of Mohammad said it was actually the first time they had ever met her.

Talab, who, along with her husband came direct to Canada from the Syrian border town of Daraa, said she feels like Saadeh and Bishawi are now her family.

"I feel like they're my sisters," said Talab.

"They made me feel calm and translated between me and the doctors during labour."

WILDLIFE

Online petition seeks 'real life' for Japan's oldest elephant

What struck Ulara Nakagawa when she first saw Japan's oldest elephant was how she resembled a figurine in a "concrete prison."

"There was absolutely nothing else for her to do," the Vancouver woman wrote in a blog post about the 69-year-old animal. "It was beyond painful to take in."

Nakagawa's observations about the elderly creature has inspired an online petition that has garnered nearly 380,000 supporters who are demanding the Inokashira Park Zoo in Tokyo give the elephant, named Hanako, either "a real life or send her to sanctuary."

Nakagawa is working with online supporters to find the best scenario for the elephant to live out her final years under conditions wildlife groups agree would be more humane.

"I think people understand time is running out for her," the 35-year-old said in an interview on Thursday. "There's something that struck a chord. I'm sure the imagery has a lot to do with it."

The elephant, whose name translates to "flower child," is visited by hundreds of thousands of people a year.

After the swell of online support, Nakagawa began working with the woman who started the petition. They are urging the zoo allow an independent expert examine the elephant.

"This would determine whether she could be moved overseas or within the country," she said.

Keepers at the zoo have acknowledged it's not fully equipped to keep an elephant. Hanako will be its last, said deputy director Hidemasa Hori.

But the aging elephant doesn't like changes and shouldn't be moved, he said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

+ REQUEST

If an expert finds that moving Hanako would be too dangerous, they will request a more spacious enclosure with amenities, such as a heated pool and sand piles.

Hanako stands in her pen at Inokashira Park Zoo near Tokyo.
EUGENE HOSHIKO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Assange asylum to end with UN ruling

UNITED NATIONS

WikiLeaks chief risking arrest, but expects to walk free

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange says he will step out of the Ecuadorian embassy in London on Friday after more than three years of self-imposed refuge from British authorities.

The exit is timed to come one hour after a UN panel on arbitrary detention is set to release its findings on his case.

In a statement posted on the WikiLeaks Twitter account, Assange said he would accept arrest if the UN panel ruled against him, but expected to be allowed to walk free if the ruling was in his favour.

If the UN finds that his confinement to the embassy is lawful, Assange said, "I shall exit the embassy at noon on Friday to accept arrest by British police as there is no meaningful prospect of further appeal.

Julian Assange THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

"However, should I prevail and the state parties be found to have acted unlawfully, I expect the immediate return (of) my passport and the termination of further attempts to arrest me," he wrote.

The Swedish foreign ministry confirmed Thursday that it had seen a copy of the panel's findings and that it had ruled Assange's detention is "arbitrary."

British authorities say their operation to arrest Assange hasn't been altered, and "should he leave the Embassy (police) will make every effort to arrest him."

Assange was granted asylum by Ecuador and has lived in its embassy in London since June 2012, shortly after he lost his bid to overturn a Swedish extradition request.

"International law is quite clear that detention is not voluntary where one's only two choices are confinement or a risk of persecution," wrote Carey Shenkman, a human rights lawyer who represents Assange in the United States.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A Syrian boy walks in Kawergosk refugee camp in Iraq carrying a plate with boiled potatoes. Refugees struggle to feed themselves as aid agencies scale back assistance. ALICE MARTINS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rania, a Syrian refugee, prepares a meal for her family in their tent in Kawergosk refugee camp in northern Iraq. ALICE MARTINS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IRAQ

Syrian families struggle for food

Perwin Shamsaddeen Ali, a Syrian refugee living in a tent camp in northern Iraq, has been reduced to cooking one meal a day for her family of four.

"I cook at 11 o'clock and we eat the leftovers in the evening. Why? Because we have no more food, that's why," the 28-year-old mother of two said. "Today I gave the kids some noodles, that's all. That's all we had."

As aid agencies struggle to keep pace with the worst refugee crisis since the Second World War, they have been forced to cut back on assistance, including food rations.

Donors will be asked to provide nearly $9 billion US to aid agencies and host countries in 2016 at an annual conference held Thursday in London — a record request. But donors have come up short in previous years.

A funding shortfall last year forced the World Food Program, the UN agency responsible for feeding the refugees, to cut back. Some refugees no longer receive any food aid. Monthly cash assistance has been reduced to $10 per person.

Some refugees say the vouchers the WFP uses to provide aid exacerbates the problem, since it can only be used in the camp's supermarket, where goods are more expensive than outside.

The WFP says its Iraq operation was 61 per cent underfunded last year. In 2015, it gave food assistance to 1.8 million displaced Iraqis across the country, plus 60,000 refugees from neighbouring Syria.

The food shortages have convinced some inside the camp that they would be better off heading to Europe, despite the dangers of crossing the choppy seas in smuggler boats.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

GLOBAL PLEDGE

World leaders pledged more than $10 billion Thursday to fund schools, shelter and jobs for Syrian refugees, money that British Prime Minister David Cameron said "will save lives, will give hope, will give people the chance of a future." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Super Bowl ads coming

TELEVISION

Bell challenges regulator's 'arbitrary' decision

A baby expounding on the benefits of online stock trading. A pint-sized Darth Vader using the Force to power his father's sedan. Burt Reynolds being kicked by a bear.

Americans watching the Super Bowl are fed big-budget, celebrity-heavy commercials that have become almost as big a draw as the game itself, and Canadians have been missing out — but not for much longer. This year could be the last in which Canadians are prevented from watching American commercials during the big game after the CRTC ruled that the U.S. ads were an integral part of the Super Bowl broadcast.

The federal regulator ordered Bell, which owns the exclusive rights to the NFL championship through 2019, to stop inserting Canadian ads for customers watching the game on an American channel.

That means after the new rule comes into effect in 2017, Canadians who want to watch the U.S. ads during the Super Bowl can simply switch over from CTV to Fox, which has the U.S. broadcast rights next year.

Perry MacDonald, who heads Bell's English-language TV business, said the CRTC's "arbitrary" decision makes no sense given the importance of ad revenues beyond his company's bottom line. Bell is challenging the decision in the Federal Court of Appeal, and the NFL has filed a brief supporting the company's claim.

MacDonald said many of the U.S. ads are available online. He said the CRTC's ruling hurts the ability of Canadian companies to reach their market and harms Bell's ability to promote Canadian shows.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Game's big numbers

1

1,300,000,000 chicken wings will be eaten in the U.S. alone

2

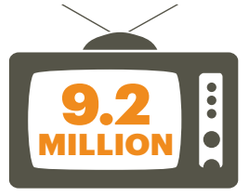
100,000,000 chicken wings will be eaten in Canada

It might seem like a stretch, but Canadians don't fall short on the wing-eating.

3

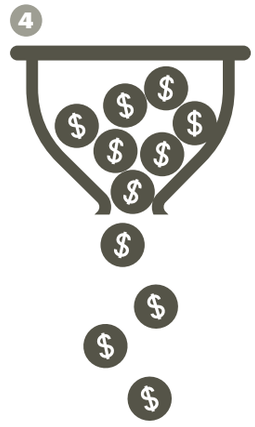
Endless eyes

For business owners, the game is a great advertising opportunity if you can afford it.



Average number of Canadians who tuned in for the 2015 Super Bowl

4



According to Les Moonves the price for a 30-second commercial will be **"north of five million dollars"**

Each second costs more than

$166,000

GRAPHIC BY ANDRES PLANA

RRSP AND TFSA ACCOUNTS

Tax key to choice of saving

In a perfect world, people would have enough money to top up both their RRSP and TFSA accounts. But that's probably not the case.

Investment advisers say deciding where to put savings depends on what people are saving for and where they fall within tax brackets.

Angela Dzinas, regional director for Alterna Savings in Ottawa, says investors may not know their exact marginal tax rate, but they need to understand where they are today and where they expect to be in the future. "RRSPs tend to be beneficial in your peak earning years, especially if you believe at retirement your income will come down so that you'll be in a lower tax bracket," she said.

When people put money into an RRSP account they are able to deduct their contributions from their income. In contrast, when money is put into a TFSA, there's no deduction. But when the money is withdrawn, gains are tax-free.

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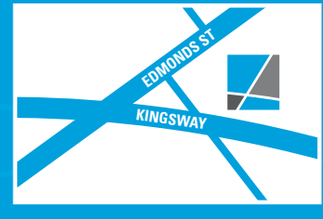

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EMMA TEITEL ON A POISONOUS PICKUP ARTIST

Roosh V's misogynistic ideology borrows more from the Middle Ages than Tucker Max; a man who says he won't even speak to female reporters because he doesn't respect their work.

A few years ago, while covering the burgeoning men's rights movement, I attended a lecture at the University of Toronto by Janice Fiamengo, a Canadian academic and self-avowed "anti-feminist" who believes women's studies programs erode free speech.

The event was attended, not surprisingly, by men's rights activists who were spellbound by Fiamengo's gospel of unrepentant political incorrectness. But most noticeably, they seemed spellbound by Fiamengo herself.

Here was a real live woman who didn't ridicule them or write them off as quacks; a real live woman who (to borrow a line from Bridget Jones's Diary) appeared to love them "just as they were."

Yes, it's likely that a lot of these guys were sexist or paranoid; socially awkward, serially jilted, libertarians or disgruntled divorced dads peeved at what they believed was a rigged family court system. But I got the distinct impression that they would happily eject their creepy worldview if a woman actually gave them the time of day. In other words, their loneliness was way more palpable than their anger.

They weren't monsters, they were just jerks.

This is not the impression I get from Roosh V, a.k.a. Daryush Valizadeh, the "neo-masculinist" American pickup artist, whose misogynistic ideology borrows more from the Middle Ages than Tucker Max; a man who says he won't even speak to female reporters because he doesn't respect their work. (Needless to say, he did not respond to my request for comment.)

Valizadeh, 36, runs Return of Kings (ROK), a website that churns out editorials advocating the repeal of women's suffrage, increased dating of women with eating disorders, and most notoriously, (in a column from last year called "How to Stop Rape") the legalization of rape, which he argues would prompt women to take greater measures to protect their bodies from unwanted advances. Surreally, Roosh says media have mischaracterized him: He is actually the anti-feminist Jonathan Swift, and "How to Stop Rape," is actually "satire."

This last claim is so absurd it seems absurd to go crazy about it. Even if it were true, is the average male visitor to Roosh's website a guy who's likely to be attuned to satire? Or is he a guy who's likely to believe that professional wrestling is real?

Why this interest in the pickup artist formerly known as Daryush? Because this past week Roosh set off a firestorm of protest when he announced that this weekend he would be hosting an "international meetup" for his followers, in bars and cafes around the world. But widespread and very vocal condemnation of Return of Kings — and "How to Stop Rape" in particular — by activists and politicians, including several Canadian mayors, apparently spooked him. Valizadeh cancelled the event, citing, what else, safety concerns.

The question now is: should everyone have made such a fuss? Were the planned protests and protestations of high dudgeon really necessary? Or should we have concluded, as columnist Charlotte Lytton did in the U.K.'s the Daily Telegraph this week, that Valizadeh's ideas are "so absurd, so pointless and idiotic, that taking them as a joke often seems like the only appropriate response."

STONE AGE AND SCARY The coolest response to the vitriol of Roosh V (Daryush Valizadeh) may be to ignore him, Emma Teitel writes, but the self-styled "neo-masculinist" blogger is worse than the typical troll.
BARTEK KUCHARCZYK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Misogyny, the hatred of women, is a word that gets used with an alarming lack of selectivity to describe a gamut of chauvinist-piggishness.

The answer is no. It may always be cooler to sit back and laugh, but even if Valizadeh is the satirist he claims to be and the entire ROK website is a trolling project of Sacha Baron Cohen proportion, we should be proud and not embarrassed that our leaders reacted so swiftly to condemn what is a poisonous ideology.

Misogyny, the hatred of women, is a word that gets thrown around a lot these days. It's used with a sometimes alarming lack of selectivity to describe a gamut of chauvinist-piggishness: from the music videos of Robin Thicke, to groping on Mad Men, to men sitting wide-legged on the subway. It has replaced sexism as the go-to term for discrimination against women.

Overuse and misuse of the term has muddied its meaning. But Roosh V is the real thing. He and his followers (who, by the way, have compiled a list on their website of female journalists whose work they find offensive, on which I assume I will soon appear), are not just harmless sad sacks, like the Men's Rights activists who came to hear Fiamengo speak at U of T. They're not just lonely and pathetic. These guys are Stone Age and scary. They're misogynists. So is their fearless leader. And they should all be dealt with as such.

Emma Teitel is a national columnist for the Toronto Star. She has been a front-of-the-book columnist for Maclean's magazine for the past four years, focusing on a wide range of subjects including women's issues and popular culture. She won the National Magazine Awards gold award for columns in 2013.

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD

metroview

High Hollywood drama, and clichés, on Ghomeshi Day 3

Soap operas have cliffhangers. Apparently, so do sexual-assault trials. Yesterday, the Jian Ghomeshi trial saw testimony from former Trailer Park Boys actor Lucy DeCoutere. It was, as DeCoutere put it, "theatre at its best."

Never more so than when Ghomeshi's lawyer, Marie Henein, drew the entire court to the brink of what she implied would be a major revelation, and then abruptly cut her questioning for the day.

She had pressed DeCoutere, who alleges one count of sexual assault and one of choking, about why she disclosed new emails on Tuesday evening, hours after the trial's first witness saw surprise email evidence in cross-examination.

"I'm going to suggest that after 16 months and 19 interviews in the media, and four press releases, and press releases by your lawyer on the eve of this trial, the very first time that this call gets made is when you know defence might have some of those emails," Henein charged.

DeCoutere said it only became clear Tuesday the information would be "critical."

With gravitas Henein asked one final time: "Do you want to tell his Honour the real conversation that was going on?"

"I'm not sure what you mean," DeCoutere said.

Henein then told the judge she'd like to end here — leaving the gallery agape, and DeCoutere in limbo.

Before facing Henein, DeCoutere commanded her own drama as she described how she "normalized" her relationship with Ghomeshi after she says he choked her and slapped her three times in Toronto in 2003.

It was a feminine cliché that stirred the emotions of women observers, who saw themselves in her: keen to please and to question themselves, afraid to offend.

DeCoutere said she didn't know how to react because she'd "never had an adult hit me before." She decided to stay at Ghomeshi's so that "whatever it was that inspired him to hit me would fade out." She kissed Ghomeshi on the couch, and then spent the weekend seeing him socially. She even sent flowers when she got home to Halifax.

Calling her own behaviour "outrageous" and "ludicrous," she said it was nonetheless authentic. She wanted to get over what happened; she wanted to "kill it," even after, at the Gemini awards, Ghomeshi allegedly cupped his hand around her throat "to remind me he choked me."

Any woman could sympathize with this desire to placate, this urge to self-blame. And it will carry its own power, despite Henein's dramatic twist. Today, we'll find out if that cliffhanger was earned.

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metro WEEKEND
Your essential daily news
MOVIES MUSIC TELEVISION DIGITAL

George Clooney stars in the latest offering from the Coen Brothers — Hail, Caesar! — which opens this weekend. CONTRIBUTED

O Brothers, we love thou

ANALYSIS

The cream of the canon of Ethan and Joel

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada

The Coen Brothers have spent most of their careers as critical darlings, favourites of people like me who love the offbeat sensibility they bring to their films.

Their classic work, which includes O Brother Where Art Thou, Barton Fink and of course, the Oscar-winning Fargo, dates back to the early '80s with their breathtaking debut Blood Simple.

The Coens made their name mixing off-the-wall comedy with crime stories. Raising Arizona redefined quirky and The Big Lebowski is a cult classic.

The sibling directors set their new film Hail, Caesar! in a fictional movie studio called Capitol Pictures but populated the story with characters ripped from Hollywood history.

Josh Brolin plays Eddie Mannix, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's legendary producer and "fixer." During Tinseltown's Golden Age, Mannix solved star's problems, allegedly using his influence to keep some of the most notorious crimes and scandals on the LAPD blotter under wraps.

The Coens don't hit a home run every time — their romantic comedy Intolerable Cruelty lacked both romance and comedy and The Ladykillers was an ill-advised remake of an Ealing Studios classic — but their genre-jumping resume contains many marvellous films that are as varied as they are entertaining.

Here are three of their movies that translate easily from the arthouse to your house.

MOVIE RATINGS by Richard Crouse

Hail, Caesar!	★★★
Pride and Prejudice and Zombies	★★★
The Choice	★
The Lady in The Van	★★★
Mojave	★★★

HOW RATING WORKS
★★★★ SEE IT
★★★ WORTHWHILE
★★ UP TO YOU
★ SKIP IT

No Country for Old Men

The Coens faithfully adapted Cormac McCarthy's novel, keeping the dark humour, unbearable suspense and high body count, while at the same time tightening up their notoriously loose narrative style.

This is muscular filmmaking, highly structured but not predictable; it's well paced and suspenseful. It's one of their best films.

A Serious Man

Though billed as a comedy, this may be the bleakest film from the Coen Brothers — and these are the same guys who stuffed someone into a wood chipper in Fargo.

The story of a man who thought he did everything right, only to be jabbed in the eye by the fickle finger of fate is a tragic comedy that shows how ruthless real life can be.

Set in 1967 Minnesota A Serious Man is apparently a thinly veiled look at the early life of the Coens, and if this is true, they deserve the designation of tortured artists.

This film is darkly brilliant and funny, but a celebration of life it ain't.

Inside Llewyn Davis

This one is a fictional look at the vibrant '60s Greenwich Village folk scene. Imagine the cover of The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan come to life and you'll get the idea.

More a character study than a traditional narrative, Oscar-nominated Inside Llewyn Davis lives up to its name by painting a vivid portrait of its main character, played by Star Wars' star Oscar Isaac.

It gives us an under-the-covers look at the struggles and naked ambition it takes to get noticed.

Once you get inside Llewyn's head you probably won't want to hang out with the guy in real life, but you won't regret spending two cinematic hours with him.

LAWSUIT

A primer on the Navajo Nation vs. Urban Outfitters case

The Navajo Nation is seeking millions of dollars from Urban Outfitters Inc. over merchandise bearing the tribe's name that the retailer has sold. The clothing chain asked a federal judge in Santa Fe, New Mexico, on Wednesday to limit how far back in time the tribe can go to seek money over the company's products, which included everything from necklaces, jackets and pants to a flask and underwear with the "Navajo" name. The judge did not issue an immediate ruling. The tribe's lawsuit alleging trademark violations has been working its way through the courts for more than three years.

Efforts to settle have failed as the tribe seeks vast sums of money from the company that also owns the Anthropologie and Free People brands. Here are things to know about the case:

What is the Navajo Nation seeking?

The Navajo Nation wants revenue from products sold by Urban Outfitters and its subsidiaries under the "Navajo" name dating back to 2008. The actual amount isn't quantified, but it could amount to millions. On some claims, the tribe wants all the profits generated from the Navajo-themed sales. On others, it wants $1,000 per day per item, or three times the profit generated by marketing and retail of products. Urban Outfitters says the tribe deserves nothing from 2008 to when the lawsuit was filed, arguing that the company has been burdened by the tribe's unreasonable delay in asserting its alleged rights.

What is the basis of the lawsuit?

The tribe's 2012 lawsuit alleges violations of federal and state trademark laws, including the Indian Arts and Crafts Act, which makes it illegal to sell arts or crafts in a way to falsely suggest they're made by American Indians. Urban Outfitters says "Navajo" is a generic term for a style or design. The company wants a judge to determine it hasn't infringed upon the tribe's rights and to cancel the tribe's federal trademark registrations.

What is the merchandise in question?

Urban Outfitters said it started using the "Navajo" or "Navaho" name on its products and in marketing as early as July 2001, when the fashion trend was in full swing. Its subsidiaries followed suit, selling cuffs, necklaces, panties and other items. The companies said they quit selling the products after hearing of the tribe's lawsuit. The Navajo Nation holds trademarks on the "Navajo" name for things like clothing.

Navajo policing of trademarks

The lawsuit against Urban Outfitters is the first such action taken by the tribe in U.S. federal court to assert its trademarks.

Former Navajo Nation Attorney General Harrison Tsosie has said the tribe twice protested the unauthorized use of "Navajo" before it sued and sent at least four dozen protest letters afterward.

The tribe relies on its members and an agreement with a Texas-based company that licenses the "Navajo" name to monitor use of the term and alert the tribal government to possible trademark infringement.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nicholas makes Sparks fly

Benjamin Walker and Teresa Palmer star in a feature film adaptation of the Nicholas Sparks' love story, The Choice. CONTRIBUTED

THE CHOICE

Novelist inspired by a heart OK with being single

Steve Gow
For Metro

Nicholas Sparks has quite literally mastered the art of the love story.

Not only have the American romance novelist's books sold over 100 million copies globally, but 11 of them have been turned into successful Hollywood hits — including the classic drama The Notebook and last year's The Longest Ride. With the release of his latest passion project The Choice now hitting theatres, we quizzed the wordsmith on his command of the courtship.

The obstacles of romance

Having penned nearly 20 hit novels, Sparks insists the key to a good love story lies in laying down a few roadblocks. In The Choice, veterinarian Travis is convinced a serious affair with neighbor Gabby would only cramp his bachelor lifestyle.

"Conflict is key to any story," insists Sparks. "Something's got to hold the characters apart so that they can overcome that. That's part and parcel with any love story. I certainly didn't (create) this — Shakespeare did it, the Greeks did it."

Write what you know

The author insists that his ideas start close to home; that his "inspiration always starts very small." In the case of The Choice, Travis is even loosely based on Sparks's own brother.

"My brother was a great bachelor for many years," admits Sparks. "It's just someone very comfortable being single and comfortable doing what he likes to do (and I thought) what kind of person would it take to win a heart like that."

The gift of trust

When Nicholas Sparks hands over one of his hit novels to a Hollywood screenwriter, he's happy to relinquish some creative control. But the author does lay some ground rules.

"They're very simple — retain the spirit and the intent of the characters. For instance, lets not make a character a pot-smoking alcoholic just because you think it would be more interesting," said Sparks. "I understand that they're very different mediums — a novel is a story told with words and a film is a story told with pictures — so I don't worry about small changes."

TRUE STORY

Fahmy memoir to be turned into film

The publisher of Mohamed Fahmy's upcoming memoir says a British company will develop the book as a feature film.

Penguin Random House Canada says Fahmy's memoir The Marriott Cell will tell the story of how he and two colleagues of Al Jazeera English were imprisoned in Egypt, and their battle for freedom.

The book is described as a political thriller that covers the arrest, trial and incarceration of bureau chief Fahmy, Australian correspondent Peter Greste and Egyptian producer Baher Mohamed in 2013.

Fahmy and Baher Mohamed were pardoned last September. Greste had previously been deported.

Fahmy's memoir is to be published in October and the publisher says The Development Partnership will turn it into a film.

"A feature is going to allow us to relive and dramatically portray what no news reel grasped; one's inner voice caught in an emotional struggle between lawlessness, failed corporate decisions, and bureaucratic red tape that left us in a vicious Kafkaesque black hole fighting for our lives and that bigger cause of press freedom," said Fahmy in a statement.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mohamed Fahmy and his wife, Marwa Omara. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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First comes love, then comes marriage, then comes the feature film adaptation

CANCON

Husband and wife team star in their real life rom-com

Steve Gow
For Metro Canada

Adam K. Scott and Jeannette Sousa wrote and star in A Date With Miss Fortune, a movie based on their romance. CONTRIBUTED

If it's a challenge just trying to agree what to make for dinner with your significant other, imagine writing and starring in a movie together.

For the past four years, that's what actors Adam K. Scott and Jeannette Sousa have been doing — penning and portraying fictional versions of themselves in the new rom-com A Date With Miss Fortune — a story about a struggling screenwriter serenading his overly suspicious sweetheart and protective Portuguese family.

"We just started collecting stories and eventually we just pieced it all together and it evolved itself into a script," recalled Scott of the decision to write the movie with his wife.

"Being in a cross-cultural relationship, it allowed for more comical situations at times and we figured it was something that most people would relate to," said Sousa. "That was always the goal — to make a film that would appeal to all nationalities, all cultures and really, people of all ages."

To that end, the Toronto-based talents have been largely successful. Already a theatrical hit in Portugal, Miss Fortune has been drawing obvious comparisons to the 2002 rom-com classic My Big Fat Greek Wedding.

Sure enough, a mingling of cultural idiosyncrasies may sound familiar to that cinematic blockbuster, but "because it's the highest-grossing comedy of all-time," Sousa concedes they kind of embrace the comparison. "We appreciate when people bring it up, we appreciate the compliment," said Sousa. "But we try to have people understand that it is a different story; that it parallels with the cross cultural aspect."

Loosely based on the real-life couple's own relationship, the pursuit of plotting a motion picture is a difficult enough task, let alone when it comes to agreeing on what embarrassing anecdotes to include — or not include.

"Sometimes there was a coin toss to be honest," said Sousa. "And then we also kept score so if my one line got in, he'd get the next one."

"I like to push the bounds probably more than Jeanette so she would say 'lets keep this a private matter' or for a sequel," laughed Scott. "She would say, if we get a sequel, I could spill the beans."

> **We just started collecting stories and eventualy we just pieced it all together and it evolved itself into a script.**
> Adam K. Scott, filmmaker

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OPÉRA DE PARIS

Black Swan choreographer quits Paris' premier ballet company

Dancer Benjamin Millepied, who choreographed for the 2010 movie Black Swan and is married to its star, Natalie Portman, announced Thursday he's stepping down as dance director at Paris' premier ballet company.

Millepied's efforts to innovate at the storied Opéra de Paris have met mixed reactions since his arrival 15 months ago, and French media have reported tensions between him and some of the company's star dancers.

He said in a statement that he's leaving for "personal reasons," and that his role didn't allow him enough time for "creation and artistic expression."

Millepied, who has also danced for New York City Ballet and directed films and music videos, said he would continue to work with the company during this season and the next, and potentially in the years to come.

In addition to his choreography, the 38-year-old Frenchman also performed in Black Swan, the disturbing story of a young woman's struggle with the psychological pressure of ballet stardom.

He sought to leave the Opéra de Paris on friendly terms, appearing Thursday at a news conference with his successor, star dancer Aurelie Dupont, and Opéra de Paris director Stephane Lissner.

"What's important for me is to create, to be inspired by the parts. That's what motivated me in the ballet and today this position (the dance director position) isn't for me, it doesn't suit me," Millepied told a news conference.

Speculation about a possible departure surfaced after a recent documentary in which Millepied said he still wasn't satisfied with the level of dance.

In an interview with Le Figaro in December, he said dancers should have more of a sense of entrepreneurship and fundraising — a concept foreign to many in France's more traditionally funded cultural world.

His predecessor, Brigitte Lefevre, played down any resistance to his unconventional ideas, saying instead that Millepied didn't have the necessary management experience for the job. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Benjamin Millepied, seen here directing a dress rehearsal last year, has departed the Opéra de Paris after reports of tensions between him and star dancers. STEPHANE DE SAKUTIN/AFP/GETTY

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Your essential daily news

Poison singer Bret Michaels launches luggage line

BRADFORD, PA.

Resort lodge balances class and comfort

Loren Christie
For Metro Canada

The rustic luxury of Glendorn

The Lodge at Glendorn is the perfect combination of cozy and kitschy, and grand. MAIN PHOTO COURTESY THE LODGE AT GLENDORN; STATUE PHOTO LOREN CHRISTIE/FOR METRO

Pittsburgh native Sally Ann Bensur summed it up,

"If you want to wear your snow boots to an elegant dinner then the Glendorn is for you."

Chatting over a beer at the resort's traditional Saturday night Skipper Lake bonfire, this unabashed fan of The Lodge at Glendorn was keen to let me know that this is a special spot.

A three-and-a-half hour drive from Toronto, this year-round 1,600 acre resort in Bradford, Pa., has been the epitome of rustic luxury since it opened its doors to the public in 1995.

Set in a valley below the Allegheny Plateau, the property was originally purchased in the early 1900s by wealthy oil magnate C.G. Dorn and his son Forest as a hunting and fishing camp. The original family dwelling, known as the Big House, offers four guest room suites, a cocktail lounge and a grand dining room anchored by a massive stone fireplace.

Throughout the century there were 12 stand alone cabins built to accommodate the growing Dorn family. Today they are part of the guests' accommodations.

As I walked in to John's Cabin it became apparent that these charming cabins were real vacation homes; each one a time capsule of 20th century Americana, capturing decades of Dorn family history.

John's kitchen looks as if it was lifted off the set of Mad Men's first season — complete with a 1950s oven, a plaid patterned Formica countertop and a bevy of bar tools and swizzle sticks worthy of Don Draper.

The bathrooms are pure 1970s with vanities, tubs and toilets in shades of pale green, mustard yellow and aquamarine, all in pristine condition.

The shelves and walls are full of art, books and board games from the 1980s. Remember Isaac Asimov's Super Quiz?

Whimsical art can be found throughout the property.

The shelves and walls are full of art, books and board games from the 1980s. Remember Isaac Asimov's Super Quiz?

As part of the Relais & Chateaux collection the resort focuses heavily on the culinary experience.

Guests are invited to enjoy a cocktail in the lounge prior to being seated for dinner.

Although menus are set, Executive Chef Joe Schafer changes the choices every day. The meals I had were incredible; melt in your mouth beef and a peanut butter and jelly inspired dessert with blackberry mousse and candied peanuts were favourites.

Activities include snowmobiling, cross country skiing and curling. Other seasons bring other outdoor options including biking, hiking and fly-fishing.

Sally Ann came last Spring for a fish camp and returned again this past New Year's Eve.

She figured this visit was her twelfth. I have some catching up to do.

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TRAVEL NOTES FRIDA, MYRTLE AND CAIUS

Frida Kahlo arrives in Russia

Russia's first major exhibition dedicated to Mexican surrealist painter Frida Kahlo has opened in a St. Petersburg museum. The exhibition that opened Tuesday in the Faberge Museum features three dozen works by Kahlo, famous for her poignant self-portraits. Organizers said the exhibit spans Kahlo's career and includes some of her most iconic paintings.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Visitor at a Frida Kahlo exhibit in St. Petersburg. DMITRY LOVETSKY /THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Myrtle Beach announces 'Dollar for Dollar' deals for Canadians

"Canadian at par." Now there's a term we want to hear as our loonie sinks. Myrtle Beach, S.C., feels our pain so it has just launched a tempting "Dollar for Dollar Deals" promotion that runs through April 30. Canadians can get hotel, dining, entertainment, golf and attraction deals up to 30 per cent off (with a few deals going as far as 65 per cent off). You must show ID to snag the deals.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Myrtle Beach is courting Canadians. VISITMYRTLEBEACH.COM

Roman pyramid gets a makeover

Rome's only surviving pyramid from ancient times is getting fresh visibility. After a Japanese clothing magnate paid for a cleanup, archaeologists are eager to show off the monument, constructed around 2,000 years ago as the burial tomb for a Roman praetor, or magistrate, named Caius Cestius. Decades of grime blackened the creamy white Carrara marble exterior of the monument near a traffic-clogged intersection near a subway stop.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cat outside the cleaned-up Roman pyramid. DOMENICO STINELLIS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Flavourful start to the new year

Restaurant gears up for Chinese New Year with a very special celebratory menu

Food is a powerful symbol of Chinese New Year, and those looking to celebrate the upcoming Year of the Monkey will likely be looking for a meal that's both delicious and auspicious.

There are many special dishes and snacks that honour the occasion, but one of the most important events is the Chinese New Year's Eve dinner, says Francis Cheung, owner of Victoria Chinese Restaurant in downtown's Royal Centre Mall, adjacent from the Burrard SkyTrain Station. He expects a full house this year on Chinese New Year's Eve, Sunday, Feb. 7.

You don't have to be Chinese to join in the celebrations, Cheung says.

"We welcome everyone to come to the restaurant and enjoy our new year's specialties, whether you're trying them for the first time or you have them with your family every year," he says. "It's a great chance to experience Chinese culture — Vancouver style."

Victoria Chinese Restaurant will have many specialties on hand, such as the Chinese New Year pudding. It's a chewy, dense pudding cake that comes in savoury or sweet varieties — turnip or taro cake with pepper and salt, or coconut or water chestnut cake with cane sugar and sweet herbs.

"It's almost like Christmas pudding with the raisins," Cheung esays.

Friends and families will customarily get together and have the pan-fried pudding cakes for dessert, or as a snack with tea.

Most dishes on Chinese New Year symbolize good fortune and prosperity, the meanings often connected to the pronunciation of the dish. The pronunciation of the Chinese ingredient black moss, for example, sounds like "a lot of money" in Chinese, while the pronunciation for the word lettuce sounds like "a lot of growth."

During a Chinese New Year's Eve dinner, diners get to literally eat their good luck, and share it with loved ones.

CONTRIBUTED

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Food court lunch options full of diversity, choices

Looking for a lunch spot downtown that offers a variety of flavours from around the world without breaking the bank?

The food court at Royal Centre Mall, located right beside Burrard SkyTrain Station, offers an incredible diversity of offerings — perfect for enjoying on a quick lunch break.

Camay Wok is well known as a place to get hot and fresh Asian stir-fry and soups. Their most popular dish is wonton soup — it can be ordered with barbecue pork or wor wontons. Another popular dish is the Singapore fried rice noodles, a curried dish with green, yellow and red peppers, barbecued pork, eggs and shrimp. The black pepper beef or chicken is a spicy dish to enjoy on a choice of rice or noodles. Visit the Royal Centre food court to find out about Camay Wok's daily specials.

CONTRIBUTED

Bubble Waffle Cafe serves popular Hong Kong specialties. Their eggy bubble waffles are a mildly sweet snack that's toasted crisp on the outside and chewy on the inside. Their most popular lunch dish is Hainanese chicken — steamed flavoured chicken served with rice, laksa soup or roti bread. Customers can also design their own soup, ordering their choice combination of noodles, broth, toppings and an iced drink.

Le Viet Cuisine, Royal Centre's resident Vietnamese food experts, provides fresh, homemade meals that have attracted a devoted following.

"Our menu derives from homemade family recipes that have been passed down through generations and are truly authentic Vietnamese food," explains Trina Vo, daughter of the owner of Le Viet Cuisine.

Their special dish "Bun Rieu" (Vietnamese crab noodle soup) is served in tomato broth topped with crab/shrimp paste and has become a crowd favourite.

At the Royal Centre food court, there's always something new and delicious to try.

Celebrate Chinese New Year
and visit Royal Centre for authentic Chinese cuisine at
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Join in the festivities, customs and culture

The Year of the Monkey is almost here. This Monday, Feb. 8, marks the Chinese Spring Festival, also known as Chinese New Year. It's the most important event of the year in Chinese culture, celebrated by thousands with red lanterns, dumplings and traditional and not-so-traditional festivities taking over the city. Here are a few ways to celebrate.

STEPHANIE ORFORD

Chinatown's Chinese New Year Parade

Plant yourself and your family on the sidewalk in Vancouver's historic Chinatown and get ready for the dozens of traditional lion dancers bringing good luck and prosperity, and many other performances by more than 3,000 participants from Vancouver's clubs and cultural organizations.
When: The parade starts at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, Feb. 14 and lasts about 2.5 hours.
Where: Along Keefer, Gore and Pender streets in Vancouver
Admission: Free

Chinatown's Chinese New Year Parade, pictured here last year on the streets of Vancouver, includes many cultural performances and thousands of participants. PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE CHINESE BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION

Vancouver Lunar Fest

Watch the Southern Taiwan Artistic Dance Troupe open the show with The Monkeys, and the world's smallest lion dancers perform at the hands of the Chin Fei Feng Marionette Theatre Troupe. Listen to music by ocarina performance group, and taste lunar tea.
When: Feb. 12 to 14
Where: Vancouver Art Gallery Plaza, downtown Vancouver
Admission: Free

The Year of the Monkey Temple Fair

This is a day to showcase all the wonderful cultural traditions from China. Facilitators will be hosting martial arts demonstrations, kids' crafts, and food workshops, all seeped in China's rich history in the tranquility of the classical Chinese garden.
When: Sunday, Feb. 14, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Where: Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden, 578 Carrall St., Vancouver
Admission: By donation

Countdown Night to the Chinese New Year of the Monkey

This Chinese New Year countdown has become a tradition, and includes a stage show, personal blessings from the Chinese God of Fortune, and a live countdown with local Chinese language Fairchild TV.
When: Sunday, Feb. 7, 8:30 p.m. to Monday, Feb. 8 at 12:10 a.m.
Where: Aberdeen Centre Mall, central atrium, Richmond
Admission: Free

Flight of the Dragon at Fly Over Canada

Soar over many of China's most beautiful nature and iconic landmarks in a roller-coaster-like virtual flight at the theatre. Pair your show with a screening of Fly Over Canada, and tour both countries by air in the same day.
When: Open now until March 6, shows every 20 minutes 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. (Feb. 9, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.)
Where: Canada Place, downtown Vancouver
Admission: $20.95 for adults

PARTY PLANNING

Modern twists on tradition

Ring in the Year of the Monkey with your own Chinese New Year party. Traditional celebrations can be a lot of work, but there are some simple ways to honour the customs and have a fun, festive event.

"For a Chinese New Year's party, it's important to create the right atmosphere," explains Angela Chan, vice president and chair of special events at the Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto. "Decorate your space in red and gold, red signifying celebration and gold signifying prosperity and riches. Green, meaning life, is also a popular colour because in China, the New Year is also a celebration of spring."

Start with your front door — welcome guests with a door covered in red crepe paper and add decorative Chinese images you can pick up at a Chinese market. Decorate indoors with vases of fresh red and yellow flowers, hang red homemade (or bought) Chinese lanterns, and adorn your table in red, yellow and gold.

Gifts of money in red envelopes are a popular Chinese New Year tradition. You can also give "lucky money" in the form of chocolate coins also in red envelopes.

"These envelopes in a basket make a nice addition to your decor," Chan says.

Another important element for Chinese New Year is the couplet.

"These are strips of red paper with a few words in Chinese wishing health and prosperity for the New Year," explains Chan. "They're not fortunes. The messages are simply good wishes. You can hire a Chinese calligrapher to make these for your party, or you can buy them already printed at a Chinese store."

To honour the Year of the Monkey, scatter a few stuffed monkey toys around your home, adding to the decor, and that children can take home as parting gifts.

"Something that is traditional, but fits in well with a modern celebration, is the tray of togetherness, which signifies luck and prosperity for the New Year," says Chan. This is a tray divided into eight sections of different sweets and snacks, served to guests as an appetizer.

"Traditionally, the tray would include things like dried coconut, lotus seeds and dried melon seeds stained red, but you can serve whatever you like," she adds.

MICHELLE WILLIAMS

Happy Chinese New Year

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Whatever is eaten on New Year's Eve is believed to affect your fortune for the year. ISTOCK

Time to celebrate Chinese dishes

SERVE IT UP

There are a few favourites that appear on the table each year

Donna Paris

"It's a time of reunion and thanksgiving, a time when all members of a family get together and thank the gods."

That's how Canson Tsang, owner of Lai Wah Heen restaurant in Toronto, describes Chinese New Year.

"There are several components to the dinner," explains Tsang, "but there are dishes that appear on the table every New Year's Eve."

The belief is whatever is eaten on New Year's Eve will affect your fortune for the year. Every region in China has its favourites, but there are always courses to signify abundance.

For food blogger Xiao Wang and her husband, it's definitely the biggest celebration of the year. "My husband and I go to my parents' place and we go to my in-laws, too, so we have double the feast," says Xiao. "My husband's parents are from mainland China and mine are from Hong Kong, so we have different dishes, but one thing we have at both homes is a whole fish."

The fish, usually steamed, symbolizes a good beginning to the New Year, as the Chinese word for fish, "yu," sounds like the one for abundance or plenty.

"We often leave a portion of leftovers, to leave some for the New Year," says Xiao. And her mom often serves a shrimp dish, as well, which is pronounced the same way as the word for laughter in Chinese.

Another item that often appears on the table is dumplings.

"My mom makes them from scratch with different fillings, and they're important because they are shaped like the old Chinese gold and silver ingots, so they represent wealth," says Xiao. They also resemble a purse, and because the filling is nestled together inside the dumpling, they represent unity of the family.

Vegetarian dishes are common, as well — especially those including vegetables with auspicious names. One Cantonese tradition is to serve hair seaweed, or black moss fungus.

"Fungus means fat choy, which also sounds like the New Year's greeting of wishing others prosperity," says Tsang. The black moss is often prepared with dried oysters as a special dish served only on New Year's Eve.

Most Chinese restaurants offer a New Year's Eve special.

"We offer so many dishes," says Michael Wang, who runs the family-owned business, Asian Legend restaurant, with his brother and sister. "But one of the best ones is Peking duck."

The best part is the duck itself with the crispy skin, he says, which is served as two or three courses, as a wrap with a pancake rolled around the chicken and fillings, such as cucumber and green onion, then the delicious broth is served as a soup with cabbage at the end.

"We get our ducks from Montreal, and because the weather is colder there, the ducks have more fat, which makes them especially flavourful," says Wang. "It's very delicious."

The list goes on: "Eggs are good, as is chicken and lobster, served whole to promote unity," says Tsang.

What else?

Long noodles for a long life. Oranges for wealth and good fortune. Fruits with lots of seeds, such as pomegranates or lotus pods, for progeny. And the word for tangerine sounds like "luck," so this fruit is especially popular at this time of year. Sweets, too, for a "sweet" year.

"In the old days, meat was a specialty, and people only ate it on very special occasions, such as New Year's," says Wang. "Today we have so many options, but still people like to have special things like the slow-cooked pork belly that's served in a bun on this night."

This year, Xiao and her husband will be cooking turnip cake, made with shredded daikon radish then pan-fried, and nian gao, a glutinous rice cake, or New Year's cake.

"We got the recipes from my husband's mom, so we are going to attempt to make them and give the recipes on (my) blog, xiaoeats.com," says Xiao.

Runway trends inspired by the Lunar New Year

YEAR OF THE MONKEY

Brands keen to promote turn of the Chinese calendar

Takara Small

Typical references for Lunar New Year (also known colloquially as Chinese New Year) evoke images of fortune cookies, dumpling delicacies, and paper dragons.

But things have changed in recent years. With China's global influence continuing to grow, so has its presence on catwalks and in side fashion boutiques.

As the Year of the Monkey sets in on Feb. 8, fashionistas around the world will also welcome the turn of the Chinese calendar.

What some are calling "China Chic" is the result of brands acknowledging Chinese consumers and embracing the holiday, says Nikki Wirthensohn Yassemi, a Toronto-based designer behind the fashion line Narces.

Born to a mother who worked for former couturier Victor Edelstein — renowned tailor who crafted clothing for the Royal family — Yassemi has grown up immersed in the fashion world, routinely traveling to China.

She sees a Chinese and Lunar New Year influence on western fashion brands as a natural evolution for the industry. "I've been a buyer since my early 20s, so buying and sourcing for a long time. Hong Kong and China have been such an influence on the industry and what I do," says Yassemi.

"We've done custom pieces in our collection, and we do have a mini red collection within it because of demand.

"Red is always a big part of our fall/winter season and obviously the biggest part is because of the holiday and Lunar New Year."

Nowhere is the Lunar New Year trend more obvious than in the high-end market, where designers from Burberry to Prada are incorporating the zodiac calendar into their business strategy.

Need a new-year inspired wallet to hold all of your good fortune in 2016? Look no further than Coach's limited accessories collection, which is bathed in red and gold. For the luxury clothing fashionista, there's Diane Von Furstenberg's special line of wrap dresses.

Meanwhile, it's not just fashion couture or pricey brands getting in on the action. This year, Adidas will release its own special edition New Year shoes and Apple has hopped on the bandwagon with its exclusive red band version of its popular sport smartwatch.

H&M's China division will launch a special collection available exclusively in its nine Asian markets: China, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines. It marks the company's third Lunar New Year collection, fronted by South Korean actor Choi Si-won and Chinese model Liu Wen.

Incorporating red into collections (which symbolizes good fortune) is a popular way to recognize the holiday. But some brands are celebrating the occasion in new ways.

This year, Burberry is partnering with WeChat (a popular interactive messaging app in China) to connect users with special holiday products.

Its new tech focus doesn't surprise Christine Faulhaber, president and CEO of Faulhaber Communications (a PR firm that represents brands such as designer Ted Baker and make-up artist Charlotte Tilburry). Faulhaber sees more and more companies thinking up new ways to celebrate the holiday.

"You've got a huge wealth of people who are moving, travelling, vacationing ... so you've got to cater to the reality that there's a Chinese consumer that's travelling around the world," she says.

"You've got to respect the Chinese heritage and find ways to engage with it. It also doesn't hurt retailers, she adds, that the holiday falls in between Christmas and Valentine's Day, when there is a well-known shopping lull.

Meanwhile, in the future, the New Year event will only grow in importance as more brands (be it fashion or otherwise) recognize the holiday's growing clout.

"The idea is that it's our jobs as communicators to take our brands and make sure they're relevant," Faulhaber says, citing retailers including the Hudson Bay Company and Bloomingdales, which launched their own special window displays for the Lunar New Year.

"Everyone is trying to figure it out."

1

2

3

4

1 Prada is offering its red clutch for a limited time to fans, retailing at $ 1,450.

2 The Apple Sport smartwatch comes in two styles; the Apple Watch Sport in silver aluminum with a red sport band, and the Apple Watch Sport in gold aluminum, starting at $519.

3 Prada monkey keychains are another item the luxury company is promoting for the 2016 Lunar New Year, retailing at $370.

4 Narces custom clothing collection, ranges in price as items are custom made.

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2016 Chinese horoscopes

MONKEY

1932, 1944, 1956, 1968, 1980, 1992, 2004
It can't just be monkey-see, monkey-do this year — you can and you must lead the way. All that pent-up passion needs a creative outlet and in both your private life and your career you will be the proverbial unstoppable force. Greatness beckons. All hail the Monkey King!

ROOSTER

1933, 1945, 1957, 1969, 1981, 1993, 2005
The cocky Rooster won't be so loud and proud this year — you want to keep as low a profile as possible. Why? Because your brain is bubbling with big ideas, some of which could make lots of money. But you need peace and quiet to plot your route to fame and fortune.

DOG

1934, 1946, 1958, 1970, 1982, 1994, 2006
You have so many schemes and so many dreams – in fact you have too many. If you want to make the most of your potential you must focus exclusively on your number one aim. The Dog can make a big noise this year, but it must be more than just howling at the moon.

PIG

1935, 1947, 1959, 1971, 1983, 1995, 2007
Home is where the heart is and if you stick close to your family over the coming 12 months this could be one of the best years ever. Switch off from outside distractions and cozy up with your loved ones in domestic bliss. The big, bad world can take care of itself.

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RAT

1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996, 2008
Travelling for fun, romance and profit will light up the coming year and being such a clever Rat you will no doubt find ways to combine all three. Keep an overnight bag by your bed at all times — you never know when you might have to make a quick getaway!

OX

1937, 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985, 1997, 2009
No one works harder than the Ox — that's why you are so successful — but don't overdo it. Pay more attention to health and fitness issues and make sure you are working and making money for yourself, not other people. Your task for the year? Learn to say "No"!

TIGER

1938, 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986, 1998, 2010
Partnership issues are highlighted this year and if you are in the market for romance you won't lack for opportunities. Be choosy. Play the field a bit before you settle down. A Dog person or Horse lover could turn out to be the soul mate you have been looking for.

RABBIT

1939, 1951, 1963, 1975, 1987, 1999, 2011
Take good care of your assets this year because with the mischievous Monkey in the ascendant you could be tempted to gamble with what you own and earn. If your attitude is "easy come, easy go" it could all go a lot quicker than you expected! Don't leave anything to chance.

DRAGON

1940, 1952, 1964, 1976, 1988, 2000, 2012
This is an auspicious year for those born under the sign of the Dragon, a year in which your creative and artistic talents will flourish and you find favour with people in positions of power. You may not be sitting on a hoard of gold just yet — but you soon will be!

SNAKE

1941, 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001, 2013
You seem to have a lot more rivals and enemies of late but you are far too smart to let them outwit you. No one surpasses the Snake for cunning and each new challenge you face this year will be an opportunity to show how s-s-skillful and s-s-serious you can be.

HORSE

1942, 1954, 1966, 1978, 1990, 2002, 2014
You will have plenty to say for yourself this year — as always — but don't give away for free information you could have charged for. Knowledge is a commodity like everything else and because you are the bearer of so many secrets others will pay top dollar for what you know.

SHEEP

1943, 1955, 1967, 1979, 1991, 2003, 2015
You are more likely to get what you want this year by disguising your intentions. In short, the less others know about your ambitions the better. You have got your eye on the top job and are determined to make it your own. Yes, you're a wolf in Sheep's clothing!

Tips For A Great Year:
This is the year of the Fire Monkey, so it's all about action and ambition and adventure. Taking risks is OK, but try not to be reckless about it. With the Monkey though it tends to be all or nothing, so big wins and big losses are equally likely.

CARLY J. CALE

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SPORTS

Coldplay lead singer Chris Martin says the band will try to honour Super Bowl halftime shows of the past, present and future on Sunday

NHL

Eberle leads Oilers in thumping Sens

Jordan Eberle scored twice and added an assist as the Edmonton Oilers started their four-game road trip with a 7-2 beating of the Ottawa Senators on Thursday night.

Mark Fayne, Zack Kassian, Andrej Sekera, Leon Draisaitl and Brandon Davidson also scored for the Oilers (21-26-5). Rookie sensation Connor McDavid, playing just his second game since returning from a broken clavicle, had two assists on the night.

Cam Talbot made 26 saves for the win.

It was much of the same for struggling Ottawa (23-23-6), which has now lost three straight and seven of its last 10.

Craig Anderson allowed three goals on 10 shots before Andrew Hammond came in and allowed four goals on 18 shots.

Mike Hoffman and Mark Stone were the lone Senators to beat Talbot.

Ottawa gave up three early goals in the first and never recovered from its dreadful start. The Senators have allowed the first goal in 35 of 52 games this season.

The Oilers will visit Montreal to take on the struggling Canadiens on Saturday. The Senators will host the Maple Leafs on Saturday night.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

THURSDAY In Ottawa

7	2
OILERS	SENATORS

NUCKS GIVE RAGGED JACKETS A TRY Canucks goalie Ryan Miller reaches for the puck as defencemen Ben Hutton slows the Blue Jackets' Matt Calvert on Thursday night at Rogers Arena. For the story, go to metronews.ca. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

MLB

Bautista hoping to stay with Blue Jays

Toronto slugger Jose Bautista would like to be a Blue Jay for life. It appears to be up to the team's new front office to make the next move.

Bautista, who is entering the final year of his contract, is coming off one of his best seasons and helped the Blue Jays end their long playoff drought last year. He made it clear in a phone interview Thursday that he would like to finish his career with Toronto.

"It would be an honour if I had the opportunity to do so," Bautista told The Canadian Press from Tampa, Fla.

Now the question is when — or if — general manager Ross Atkins and/or team president Mark Shapiro will be willing to spend the big dollars needed to get him signed to another multi-year extension.

Jose Bautista
GETTY IMAGES

Bautista posted 40 homers and 114 RBIs in 2015. Teammate Edwin Encarnacion, who hit 39 homers and had 111 RBIs, is also entering the final year of his deal.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

Red Bulls jolt Impact in pre-season opener

The Montreal Impact fell 5-0 to the New York Red Bulls in their first action of the Major League Soccer pre-season on Thursday.

The game was played in three 45-minute periods, each with different lineups. The Red Bulls took the first 2-0, the second 2-0 and the third 1-0.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Pistons upend Knicks

Anthony Tolliver and Reggie Jackson made a trio of big three-pointers, and the Detroit Pistons avoided a colossal collapse, beating the New York Knicks 111-105 on Thursday night.

The Knicks erased the Pistons' 27-point second-quarter lead, but Detroit pulled away late thanks to Tolliver and Jackson's late threes. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Big decisions lie ahead of Canucks

NHL

Next four weeks could define long-term makeup of team

Cam Tucker
Metro | Vancouver

The Vancouver Canucks are at a crossroads, approaching a point that will further shape the days, weeks and months remaining in the 2015-16 season and beyond into the summer and next year.

Coming out of the all-star break against the Columbus Blue Jackets on Thursday at Rogers Arena, the Canucks were not in a playoff spot. But they're still in contention.

They're also about to be as healthy as they've been in months, especially if defenceman Dan Hamhuis (facial fractures suffered in December) returns to the lineup on Saturday.

Their schedule isn't as daunting as it was prior to the break, and the Canucks approach the trade deadline still trying to remain competitive while holding a few pending unrestricted free agents — like Hamhuis and forward Radim Vrbata — that could garner interest from other teams over the next four weeks.

A roster under transition, the goal is still — at least publicly — to try to make the post-season.

Dan Hamhuis, left, and Radim Vrbata, right, are both slated to become unrestricted free agents this summer.
DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

General manager Jim Benning remains steadfast in his stance that he wants to see what this team can offer when as healthy as possible. That time is essentially now.

Henrik Sedin, the club's captain, was expected to play versus the Blue Jackets. They have Brandon Sutter back in their lineup, which helps them up the middle.

26.3

Before Thursday night's game, Sports Club Stats gave the Canucks a 26.3 per cent chance of advancing to the playoffs.

Being competitive, perhaps even moving into a playoff spot in the Pacific Division or wild card, may not be impossible in February. Of the 11 games they have this month, only four of those are against teams currently in a post-season position.

That changes in March, when the Canucks play 12 games against teams currently holding a playoff spot. That is, of course, subject to change between now and Feb. 29. Teams currently in the playoff bubble may be on the outside by that time.

And if the Canucks are competitive when the deadline rolls around, how will that dictate what Benning does in the trade market?

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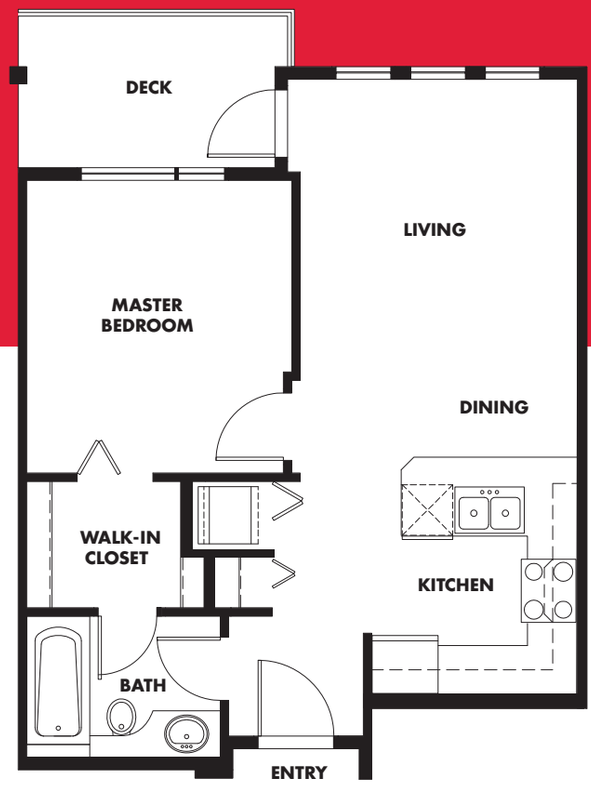

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SUPER BOWL 50

Carolina stands in way of Manning's perfect ending

It's the perfect scenario, a Hollywood-type script: Peyton Manning emulates John Elway and rides off into the sunset with the Lombardi Trophy in his grip.

Will it really happen?

For Manning to take the Denver Broncos to their first NFL title since the team's current general manager, Elway, did in 1999 before retiring, seems the sentimental choice across the nation.

Like Elway, Manning has had a taste of losing in the big game, going 1-2, including a lopsided loss to Seattle two years ago. Elway dropped his first three Super Bowls, then won his final two.

"I am very grateful for the opportunity," the 39-year-old Manning said. "I keep probably repeating myself but I'm honoured to be a part of it, and the other three that I played in, I was honoured to be a part of those as well."

Should this be Manning's final game, he will leave as the most accomplished regular-season quarterback, owning five league MVP awards. He's had a difficult past few seasons, sidelined for 2011 entirely because of neck surgeries, then struggling in last year's playoffs and missing six games in 2015 with a foot injury.

But he also earned that fifth MVP in 2013 before falling to Seattle.

Standing in the Broncos' way, though, is simply the best team in football.

This is the third straight season the top seeds have won conference titles. The Panthers are 17-1, have the league's most prolific offence behind All-Pro quarterback Cam Newton, and a big-play defence. That D might not match the stats of the Broncos (14-4), who ranked first overall, but it's just as impactful.

"I sound like a broken record, but yet for a dream to play out as it has through the ups and downs, it just means the world for us to get what you prepare for," says Newton, finishing off his fifth and, by far, best pro season.

"For us, the ultimate goal for this sport is to win a Super Bowl. You win national championships in college and … you try to get drafted to a team that's going to put you in the right position to win a Super Bowl."

That's where the Panthers have arrived. Carolina is a 5-1/2-point favourite to become only the third team to go 18-1 and win the Super Bowl.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PREDICTION

The Associated Press predicts the Panthers will win 27-20, leaving Manning to ponder if he wants to leave football after losing his final game.

Cam Newton GETTY IMAGES

Peyton Manning THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

APE GOES BANANAS FOR PANTHERS

An ape at the Salt Lake City zoo has predicted the Carolina Panthers will win the Super Bowl. The one-year-old orangutan named Tuah chewed up a cardboard Panthers sign and later kissed a papier-mache Panthers helmet. Tuah's dad picked seven straight winners before dying in 2015.

RAVELL CALL/THE DESERET NEWS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Panthers abide by mantra on, off field

"Keep pounding."

The words have become synonymous with the NFC champion Carolina Panthers.

They're on the walls of the stadium's weight room, on the tunnel leading to the field and even stitched into the collar of every Panthers jersey.

"It's a way of life around here," said Panthers assistant defensive line coach Sam Mills III.

Mills' father Sam, a Panthers linebacker from 1995-97 and then an assistant coach, uttered the phrase "keep pounding" at a downtown Charlotte hotel on Jan. 2, 2004, the night before the Panthers started a run to their first Super Bowl. It has been become the team's rallying call.

Mills, the team's linebacker coach at the time, was dying of intestinal cancer when he gathered players together in a meeting room before they would beat the Dallas Cowboys in a wild-card playoff game.

There, Mills delivered an emotional message akin to Jim Valvano's "Don't Give Up" speech, say those in attendance. There were no microphones on hand to record the words, no TV cameras to capture the moment. But the message was clear: No matter how hard things get, no matter how bleak things look — keep pounding.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

1959-2005

Sam Mills died on April 18, 2005, at 45.

IN BRIEF

Manziel's ex-girlfriend tells police he struck her

Johnny Manziel's ex-girlfriend told police the Cleveland Browns quarterback hit her during an argument last weekend in Texas and said he appeared to be on drugs.

Fort Worth police released a report Thursday that provided the first details of the altercation Saturday between Manziel and Colleen Crowley. Manziel is being investigated for a possible assault on Crowley.

She told police he was "aggressive" toward her after they were out with friends at the Zaza Hotel in Dallas. She said he struck her, including once in the left ear, before they drove back to her Fort Worth apartment.

Johnny Manziel GETTY IMAGES

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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RECIPE Fried Egg Sandwich with Avocado Basil Spread

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

This sandwich is so simple it almost makes us feel bad calling it a recipe. But then we remember just how good it is when the yolk oozes into the creamy, sweet avocado mixture and all those feeling wash away. Boy were we silly.

Ready in
Prep time: 5 minutes
Total time: 15 minutes
Serves 2

Ingredients
- 1/2 avocado
- 5 basil leaves, torn into pieces
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- Butter for pan
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 shaved Monterey jack cheese
- Salt and pepper
- 4 slices of bread

Directions
1. In a small bowl, mix avocado until smooth. Stir in the lemon juice and pieces of basil.
2. Toast four slices of bread. Spread two slices with avocado mixture. Set aside.
3. Meanwhile, over medium heat, warm a skillet. Add 1 to 2 tsp of butter and allow to melt. Crack the eggs into the pan and leave until whites are nearly cooked then, so the yolks don't break, very gently flip eggs. Allow to cook a few more seconds, and then remove the eggs from the pan.
4. Place an egg on the two slices of bread without avocado spread. Sprinkle the warm egg with cheese as well as salt and pepper. Top the egg side of the sandwich with the slice of bread that has the avocado spread. Cut and serve.

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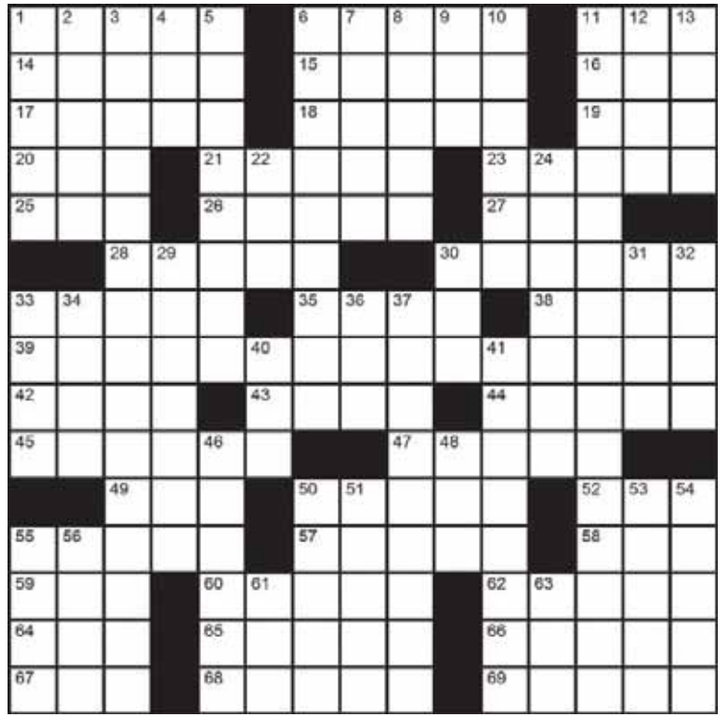
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Rap legend Mr. Shakur
6. Rachel of "The Constant Gardener" (2005)
11. Devitalize
14. Lyre-playing Muse
15. Discreet city passageway
16. Fully
17. __ video
18. Puz' like this
19. Spiritual 'way'
20. So far
21. Mary-Kate __
23. Legendary movie critic Roger
25. Celebrated cathedral city
26. __ table (Puts out forks, etc.)
27. __-de-sac
28. __ beam
30. Wheeled
33. Field
35. Some PCs
38. Celeb's ride
39. What the show "Monsters Inside Me" on Animal Planet is all about: 2 wds.
42. Frankie Avalon's "__ Dinah"
43. "Take __ __ song..." - The Beatles
44. Nirvana album, with In
45. Prepares vegetables this way
47. Let's Talk Leftovers: "...as for the __, __ shall keep that for sandwiches tomorrow."
49. Cellular stuff
50. __ Lake Accord
52. Navigator's need
55. Not neat
57. Also: French
58. Pub pintful
59. "__ la la!"
60. Pressure units
62. Montreal-style __
64. Cuckoo bird type
65. Consonant seperators, frequently
66. Watchful
67. Cooking amt.
68. Fathom
69. Corrodes

DOWN
1. "Fiddler on the Roof" (1971) role
2. An archangel
3. Canadian Politics: In 2017, it'll be up for grabs for the Conservatives: 2 wds.
4. __ __ crossroads
5. Stupendous
6. Hair removers: 2 wds.
7. British actor Cary
8. Actress/singer Ms. Massey (b.1910 - d.1974)
9. Sun. delivery
10. Louisiana music style
11. In weather reports, they show things like storm systems swirling above the Earth: 2 wds.
12. Wing-like
13. Conspiracy
22. Jeans brand
24. Steve McQueen movie of 1968 with a big car chase scene
29. Inhabitants of South America's famous mountain chain
30. Pretoria's land [acronym]
31. Urgent situation, briefly
32. "I can only __ __ much." (I need assistance)
33. Tots up
34. Jackie Wilson's "__ Petite"
36. Cote cry!
37. Iconic character of classic Canadian TV: 2 wds.
40. '_' __ in Yukon
41. Seaweed-wrapped appetizer establishment: 2 wds.
46. Washer and dryer company
48. Diana Krall's hubby's initials-sharers
50. Ms. Menounos of showbiz news
51. Across-the-Pond moneys
53. Watchful
54. Hides
55. Castle's protection
56. Geological periods
61. Over, poetically
63. House siding material, for short

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
What you wish for is what you'll get. Believe something good will happen and it most likely will, but if you believe something bad will happen then that's what will occur.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
The sooner you stop blaming others the sooner you'll be able to take control of your fate. Whatever your problems are you still have room to maneuver. Your main task now is to take responsibility for who you are.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
Your reluctance to hurt other people's feelings is holding you back. It's good that you consider others but you need to put your own needs and desires first.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
You're on the verge of something big, something that could bring fame and fortune. Others want to be close to you so some of the glory rubs off on them. There's plenty to go round.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
The closer you get to Monday's new moon the more partnerships and relationships will come into play. Today and over the weekend be on the lookout for people whose big personalities mirror your own.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Even the most livewire of Virgos may start to feel jaded today and the reason is that you are doing too much. It is time to slow down. Don't do more, do less — but do it 10 times better.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You feel good about yourself at the moment and you should be using that feeling to create something substantial. You'll get the chance to do some remarkable things this week.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
The people you feel closest to emotionally are feeling neglected. Spend time with them. Besides, the phase you have just been through was immensely busy and you deserve some down time.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
What happens in the run-up to the new moon on the 8th will make you realize how lucky you are to have certain people as friends. Be more sociable and adventurous than usual!

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Cosmic activity in the area of your chart that governs what you own and what you earn will bring money matters into sharper focus and you will become aware that certain people have been taking advantage of you.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
There will rarely be a better time to start in a new direction. Be encouraged to leave old ways behind and explore uncharted territory. You're blessed with the spirit of adventure.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
You have plenty to say — but make sure you can back up claims with facts and figures. Enemies will be looking for ways to trip you up. Don't make it easy for them.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

		3	1				9	7
	1					4		
9					4			
5					2			
3	4	8			9	2	5	
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	3	2				9	7	

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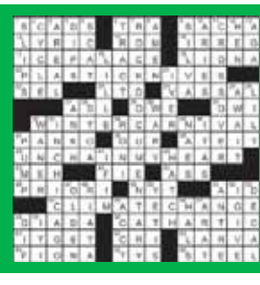

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5	6	7	1	4	9	8	2	3
8	5	1	7	6	2	9	3	4
3	2	6	4	9	8	1	7	5
7	4	9	5	1	3	2	8	6

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